MARVEL
ULTIMATE
BLACK PANTHER
21
HILL | NIETO | CURIEL
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Shuri said these were the coordinates.
Trust nothing. Remain ready.
You are not our king, Wanderer.
Yet your queen trusted me to lead you.
Erik is seeking the kingdom now. He's following your word, Shuri. Because he had no choice.
Is this a trap?
What *is* your relationship to my queen? Do you share her bed, Wanderer?
I sleep alone.
Stay focused, Milaje.
I have no interest in traps, Okoye.
Everything I have done, I've done to protect Wakanda. All I have led Killmonger to is the truth.
We're looking for a way to stop the Progenitors.
Assume this place knows that.

Why did you not tell your brother of this?! Why did you not tell *me?!*
"Because T'Challa would not have accepted it. Not in time.
"Wakanda has *an opposite.* Just as vibranium has an opposite. Khonshu sought that power for himself. And T'Challa has no idea what he can be, Okoye."
Wakandan? This symbol?
No.
The Progenitors gave the people of Wakanda's "opposite" gifts--dark vibranium, cosmic knowledge. They believed they were chosen. Some among them felt they were *cursed.* And they were right.
The vibranium in this ring. It's reacting.
So we're close.

Did you kill your father?
This place still has power.
No.
But I let it happen. He would have led my brother into the hands of the *Vodu-Khan*. I suspected them. And I was right.
Shuri...

This is a kingdom. And none of you knew it was here.
My father knew the truth. About vibranium. About the Progenitors. About what was coming.
And like every generation of Wakanda, they thought they had more time. Willing to risk all of us to keep the truth hidden. To protect their *legacy*.
Your brother will hate you now.
My brother is either already dead, or he must kill what he was to be what he can be.
This is a war of Gods, Okoye. Khonshu knew that. You must accept that. The last time I saw T'Challa, he was changing. May my brother finish his Great Becoming.
They worshipped this civilization as Gods.
To gain the *power* of Gods.

And this place is older than your Wakanda.
All your ceremony. All your traditions. Yet you people know nothing of what you are.
Take note, Dora Milaje. It took a wanderer like me to show you.

And you thought Wakanda was the only kingdom. I bet you people never even looked for another.
This was a city of worship...
Their worship didn't keep their kingdom alive.
My experience? The last thing people do before they wind up destroyed is ask their Gods to protect them.
Have you no belief, Killmonger?
Only in what I can see. Not what I hope is there.
Let's move deeper. Stay tight.

It's hard to look at you and see someone who would let her own father die.
My father barely knew me. I was raised by handmaidens while he gave speeches.
T'Challa mattered to him. I was just born.
But enough of the past. There is something you need to see.
I can't trust you, Shuri.
Of course you can. I *love* Wakanda even more than you do. Which is why I always prepared for war.
I just didn't realize what would be on the other side of that war.
I looked at my brother's data. Ran some tests. Found some patterns.
What I want to show you, no one here can know. Not until my brother returns.
Show me.

We will guard this place. But I sense its past may still live, Wanderer. Move quickly.
I think I've found a history lesson.
The Progenitors came...
One nation bowed. The other walked away.
That is Wakandan armor. Our ancestors stood in pride. They did not serve.
General, I hear--
Urk!

T'Challa had discovered how to isolate one vibranium signature from another. Like hearing a song in the wind.
So I analyzed our foundational architecture.
TEK
These energy signatures go miles beneath Wakanda...
The Americans. The Nigerians. My brother said they were looking for a gateway.
These... ancients. They want to invade this world.
Okoye. The gateway is here.
It has always been here.
"Something's wrong..."

Call the others off their guard. We stay together.
Milaje!
Milaje! Regroup!
What is that?
GRIIIKK
Stay close! Follow my lead!
No, Erik.

Follow *my* lead.

T'Challa...?
Look...
...more have assembled!
RREEEEEEEK
KRRSSHHEEEK

While you were gone, I sat in your fancy chair. Hope you don't mind.
I'm sure you had a good reason, Erik.
KRAK
You can have it back. Being a king doesn't look good on me.
Too many rules.
You know what they say about rules--
You missed that one, Black Panther.
You're welcome.

Appreciated.
Could you always do that sonic boom thing, or is this some new "back from exile" thing?
Do you believe in our pantheon of Gods?
Not really.
Then my answer would do you little good.
Those biomechs were protecting whatever's behind this.
Sure...
But how do *you* know what's behind it?

Dora Milaje on comms.
Your brother is alive.
Then I will face his judgment.
And you must use yours. We are on the eve of war.
Can we stop them?
These... *beings* think they can simply walk through Wakanda like a door.
So let them find us *unbound*.
Our warriors. Our weapons. Our will.
Awaken it *all*.

"And let them see what we have done with their precious vibranium."
Erik, today, we might challenge your lack of belief.
What is that?
Vibranium held in liquid form. A feat I once thought impossible.
The Western Europeans used to scry with black mirrors in the dark.
To see beyond sight.
Here we can do the same. Because a Goddess told me so.

What... is this?
This is the home of our enemies.
And of those who shared their power with us. They are the same.
You sound... different.
Been through a lot.
And the worst is coming.
If you stand with me, then you will be fighting to save the world. Our lives won't matter. We will have to be willing to die.
T'Challa. I'm always willing to die.
That's what keeps me free.
Then let us return to protect the freedom of Wakanda.

Shuri, do not make me regret this.
I will earn it.

Later...
I don't own Ororo's choices.
Besides. I thought about sleeping with your wife.
You guys might wanna work a few things out.
Come again?
So these aliens have her? Then I'm going to get her.
I don't know where she is.
Then ask your Gods.
She's not dead. They would have killed her had they wanted to.
I'm not going to just believe in that, T'Challa!
And I won't leave her. But we need to focus. What would she want?
Gentlemen.
Shuri says she's started to earn her redemption.
She asked that we join her...

"...in the armory."
I allowed our father to die.
Because I was afraid.
I gave Ra and Khonshu information.
Because I was afraid.
I do not wish to escape justice, T'Challa.
But I wish to no longer be afraid.
Let me fight in this war. Let me use what I have built.
My brother, my king, on your mercy...
...set me free.
TO BE CONTINUED...